

Wheeler, Goldwater Differ on ABM Testing

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and former Sen. Barry Goldwater differed yesterday on the need for atmospheric nuclear testing if the United States decides to develop an anti-ballistic missile system.

Gen. Earle G. Wheeler and the 1964 Republican Presidential nominee stated their views in separate television interview programs.

Wheeler said on "Meet the Press" (WRC-NBC) that underground testing would be good enough to check out an ABM system.

Goldwater said on "Face the Nation" (WTOP-CBS) that the United States should break the present nuclear test-ban treaty if the decision is made to build an ABM system.

Goldwater cited secret Senate testimony by scientists that the Russians apparently had employed their atmospheric tests in the last 1950s "to learn what happens to a missile when it is traveling through a nuclear effect."

Goldwater added "we would have to assume that if they did this, they learned what they had to do to correct the errors that could be caused by the effect, have them built into subsequent weapons."

Wheeler said publicly what he has said in private on Capitol Hill: that he favors the development of an ABM system.

He said he opposed any change in the nuclear test-ban treaty that would prohibit underground testing. Such underground blasts would enable the United States to test an ABM system.

Wheeler and other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff favor U.S. development of an ABM system as a response to signs that the Soviet Union is doing just that.

Wheeler noted that Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara has recommended postponement of an ABM decision because deployment of such a system would probably prompt Moscow to build up its offensive missiles to maintain the balance of power.

But in view of the technical difficulties and expense of deploying more offensive missiles, Wheeler said, the Joint Chiefs "don't consider that this is necessarily so."

Wheeler said that the military leaders and their civilian superiors "are closer together today than they have ever been before in the history of the De-

partment of Defense," and that it would be good if they could always agree.

"But on the other hand I think it would be very bad if we viewed it with different eyes but appear before the Congress and say we see it the same way," he added.

"If we seriously intend to go ahead" with an ABM system, he said, "I think we would have to break the treaty."

Touching on the war in Vietnam, Goldwater called for U.S. planes to bomb supplies stored on the docks at the North Vietnamese port of Haiphong, as well as Mig airfields around Hanoi.

If a Russian ship is hit, he said, "It's just too damned bad."

Goldwater said he believed President Johnson would decide in favor of such bombing, although he added, "It is just a hunch."